

REMARKS

This response is being submitted within three months after the shortened three-month term set for responding to the July 1, 2003 Office Action. Therefore, a petition and fee for an extension of time are enclosed herewith.

in items 1 and 2 on pages 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects currently pending Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 31-33, and 40-45 for allegedly being obvious in view of five cited documents. Please note that only the last four cited documents are listed in the Notice of References Cited. However, the first cited document (Ishioka et al.'s article) should also be listed in the Notice of References Cited to ensure that the first page of any issued U.S. patent lists Ishioka et al.'s article in the "References Cited" section. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to issue a new Notice of References Cited listing Ishioka et al.'s article.

The Examiner's reasoning for rejecting currently pending Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 31-33, and 40-45 is set forth in item 2 in the Office Action. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the prior art does not teach or suggest all of the features of currently pending Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 31-33, and 40-45.

It is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Allowance of the application at an early date is solicited.

The Applicants reserve the right to seek protection for any un-claimed subject matter either subsequently in the prosecution of the present case or in a divisional or continuation application.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 12-0415. In particular, if this Response is not timely filed, then the Commissioner is authorized to treat this Response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 C.F.R § 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this Response timely filed; and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account No. 12-0415.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

January 2, 2004
(Date of Deposit)

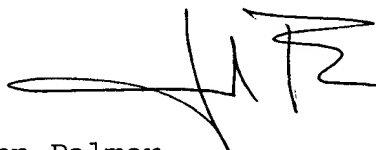
JOHN PALMER
(Name of Applicant, Assignee
or Registered Representative)

(Signature)

(Date)

1-2-04

Respectfully submitted,



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